

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### **Report to Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee**

**Date**                    **11 October 2022**

**Report of:**            **Head of Democratic Services**

**Subject:**              **LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW – CONSULTATION  
ON PROPOSALS FOR FAREHAM**

#### **SUMMARY**

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is tasked to periodically review electoral arrangements for every council area in England. The last review in Fareham took place in 2000 and this review is scheduled to be completed in time for the May 2024 local elections.

The second part of the electoral review is to consider the warding arrangements for the Borough, including a new pattern of wards and the naming of those wards. Fareham Borough Council is invited to submit its response to the Local Government Boundary Commission's draft recommendations, as part of the public consultation which closes on 15 November 2022.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Licensing & Regulatory Affairs Committee reviews the Boundary Commission's draft recommendations for new ward boundaries across the Borough of Fareham, and

- (a) provides wording to be incorporated within the Council's response to the consultation;
- (b) delegates authority to the Head of Democratic Services to create the draft consultation response reflecting the Committee's views and those of the Member Working group; and
- (c) agrees that the draft consultation response be presented to Council at its meeting on 27 October 2022, prior to it being submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on 15 November 2022.

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (the Commission) is the independent organisation responsible for conducting reviews of local authority electoral arrangements. This is carried out through an 'electoral review'. The Commission's view is that a 'good' review is one where the local authority actively engages with the process.
2. The final stage for the review is to set a new pattern of electoral wards for the Local Authority. The Commission has recommended that 32 councillors should be elected to the council in future. The Commission's consultation is seeking responses to its proposed pattern of wards across Fareham.

## **BACKGROUND**

3. The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 gives the Commission the power to review the electoral arrangements of all, or any, principal councils in England.
4. In drawing up a pattern of electoral wards, the Commission seeks to:
  - Deliver electoral equality for local voters – this means ensuring that each local councillor represents roughly the same number of people so that the value of your vote is the same regardless of where you live in the local authority area:
  - Reflect the interests and identities of local communities – this means establishing electoral arrangements which, as far as possible, maintain local ties and where boundaries are easily identifiable: and
  - Promote effective and convenient local government – this means ensuring that the new wards or electoral divisions can be represented effectively by their elected representative(s) and that the new electoral arrangements as a whole allow the local authority to conduct its business effectively. In addition, the Commission must also ensure that the pattern of wards reflects the electoral cycle of the council.
5. The Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee is the appropriate forum to review and agree the Council's response to the consultation on the Commission's draft recommendations for Fareham's warding arrangements by virtue of its functions relating to elections, as set out in part 2, chapter 6 of the Council's Constitution.

## **BOUNDARY COMMISSION DRAFT PROPOSALS**

6. The full details of the Commission's draft recommendations can be viewed via the Commission's website here: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/hampshire/fareham>.
7. The Commission's summary report containing details and map views for all the proposed wards is included at Appendix A with an overview map of the ward boundaries across the borough at Appendix B.
8. In its report, the Commission acknowledged that the Council's borough-wide warding pattern submission "provided for a uniform pattern of wards resulting in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority". The Commission has therefore

published its recommendations which are predominantly based on the Council's proposal which was submitted in July 2022.

## **CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

9. The Boundary Review Member Working Group met on 7 September 2022 to review the Commission's proposals and to discuss each of the Commission's alterations to the Councils' submission in detail.
10. In providing a general response to the Commission's proposals, the Member Working Group is keen for the point to be made to the Commission that straight lines on a map do not necessarily accurately reflect actual community ties. This comment follows a number of examples where boundary lines appear to have been "smoothed out" by the Commission's proposals where the Council's submission had created a "jagged" boundary around land holdings, having carefully considered access roads for both properties and open spaces.
11. The Member Working Group agreed that the consultation submission should highlight the following areas where further narrative is required to support the Council's original plan:
  - Warsash Road/Hunts Pond Road triangle – the postal address is Titchfield Common but the Commission proposal has it in the Meon ward.
  - Church Road has been split down the middle with properties to the north in Park Gate and properties to the south in Titchfield Common.
  - St John's Church has been included in Titchfield Common ward but it is the church for Locks Heath.
  - Catisfield Road has been included in Avenue ward but is closely associated with Titchfield village in Meon ward.
  - The boundary line cuts through The Avenue resulting in properties to the north in Avenue ward and to the south in Fort Fareham ward.
  - Deanes Park Road has been included in Fareham Town but should remain in Wallington & Downend ward.
  - The Commission's changes to Avenue, Fort Fareham and Fareham Town wards have resulted in changes to the ward electorate numbers.
12. The Licensing & Regulatory Affairs Committee is invited to provide commentary on these areas and any other changes proposed by the Commission's proposals.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

13. The Council is required to engage in the Electoral Review process, as set out in legislation. The review provides the opportunity for Members to fully engage and contribute to the consultation response submission during the review phase.

## **CONCLUSION**

14. The Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee is invited to consider the content of the Boundary Commission's draft recommendations for new ward boundaries across the Borough of Fareham.
15. The Committee is asked to consider recommendations (a) (b) and (c):
  - (a) provide wording to be incorporated within the Council's response to the consultation;
  - (b) delegate authority to the Head of Democratic Services to create the draft consultation response reflecting the Committee's views and those of the Member Working group; and
  - (c) agree that the draft consultation response be presented to Council at its meeting on 27 October 2022, prior to it being submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on 15 November 2022

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Fareham Draft Recommendations Report

Appendix B - Fareham Draft Recommendations Map

### **Background Papers:**

Correspondence with Review Officers at the Local Government Boundary Commission

### **Reference Papers:**

Local Government Boundary Review - Warding Arrangements Submission – Report to Licensing & Regulatory Affairs Committee 27 June 2022

Local Government Boundary Review – Council Size Submission - Report to Licensing & Regulatory Affairs Committee 23 November 2021

### **Enquiries:**

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